

IGP: THREATS AGAINST PM ARE REAL

Police advise Anwar to limit his public appearances, and have increased his security detail

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INSPECTOR-GENERAL of Police Tan Sri Razarudin Husain said the threats against Prime Minister Datuk Seri

Anwar Ibrahim are real and should not be trivialised or labelled as political manoeuvres for personal gain.

He said he had discussed Anwar's security issue with Deputy Inspector-General of Police Datuk Seri Ayob Khan Mydin Pitchay and his directors.

The threats, he said, were due to Anwar's outspokenness on the humanitarian issue in Palestine and the displacement of the Gaza people.

He said this in a special interview with *Berita Harian* and TV3 recently.

Anwar might have been notified of the possible threats from other countries, adding that the Special Branch was working with its foreign counterparts to verify the information, he added.

He said only Anwar would have complete details of these threats



Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Razarudin Husain says only the prime minister would have complete details of the threats and he may choose not to disclose them to avoid offending countries that shared sensitive information and, in turn, creating public disorder.

PIC BY AIZUDDIN SAAD

and that the prime minister might choose not to disclose them to avoid offending countries that shared sensitive information and, in turn, creating public disorder.

The parties making the threats would not openly announce them to avoid international backlash for bullying a smaller nation, he said.

"Given Malaysia's political climate, information related to espionage, the prime minister's, security or the economy may require face-to-face discussions.

"We won't use phones or any other means to maintain the confidentiality of this information. We will only discuss it with the relevant individuals to avoid public panic."

Razarudin said no reports had been lodged against the country that issued a threat to Anwar.

In his speech at the "Malaysia Stands with Palestine" rally recently in Bukit Jalil, Anwar said Malaysia had received criticism from pro-Israel countries, particularly the United States, for its support of Gaza and Palestinians.

He later clarified that the threats had come from European members of parliament.

Razarudin said while Anwar's safety was of the utmost priority, efforts were also being made to monitor possible economic sabotage.

"The Special Branch has a division that assesses economic sabotage. But what is important to

me is the safety of our prime minister, because if anything happens to him, I will bear the shame.

"As the IGP, it is my responsibility to ensure safety and public order in Malaysia. So if the IGP is ashamed, the whole police force will be ashamed, too, for not being able to protect one prime minister."

He acknowledged the presence of local and foreign intelligence operatives, indicating the potential security concerns they posed to Anwar.

He cited the assassination of Fadi Mohamed al-Batsh, 35, a Palestinian professor and a member of Hamas who was killed in a drive-by shooting in Kuala Lumpur in 2018, and last year's arrest of a

Malaysian woman for kidnapping a Palestinian believed to be a computer programming expert.

The investigation, Razarudin said, found that the woman had been recruited by Israeli intelligence agency Mossad in 2016 and that she had served as a freelance operative until her arrest.

"If a software scientist (computer programming expert) for Hamas can be a target, our prime minister is even more at risk.

"We can have more software experts, but Malaysia has only one prime minister. So I am convinced that there is a threat either to his (Anwar's) life, to our economy or to others."

He said Anwar had been advised to limit his public appearances, and police had since increased the number of his bodyguards, especially when he was on the ground.

He said police would also be vigilant against cyberattacks, adding that the authorities were looking at beefing up cybersecurity, including enhancing the firewall.

Police, he added, would work with the armed forces and other agencies to ensure safety and public order.

On the safety of Malaysians, including embassy officials abroad, he said he was confident that they were well protected.

However, he did not rule out the possibility of embassy personnel being recalled if there were safety risks.